

[Interview with Vito Cacciola #50]

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Interview

with

Vito Cassiola

. . .

by

Morton R. Lovett

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“A well as remembered.”

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Interview with Vita Cassiola

by Morton R. Lovett

. . .

(from memory)

“Hello Mr. Lovett. I am mosta happy to see you. I thinka about you much.

“I have been busy, thanka you, but not with fixa de shoe s. I have had plenty time to playa de music. I also giva encouragement to others. That is best.

“No, I do not expect kind words to be [r etuch-ed?]. Once I did. I was disappoint-ed. Lika de Bible say: ‘Hope long deferred maketh de heart sicka.’

“Last night some boys coma in to make harmony. De music bringa happiness. Also I lika de boys. I wanta to teacha them de righteous way. I take de helm of life and turna it lika this. Maybe I steera them in de better channels.

“I thinka many peoples hava los-ed their direction. They follow whims and [caprices?]. They drifta into trouble. De true compass is de Bible.

“Don't you believa, Mr. Lovett, that many boys geta wreck-ed by bad habits? They is ruined by alcohol and sin. Their hearts are be...be...bewither-ed.

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"No, I do not mean bewildered. I mean they become lika de grass what geta dry.

"You calla it withered? I will finda de dictionary.

"Ah! here it is. Wither, wilt, fade, shrivel. You is right, Mr. Lovett.

"Some peoples think I usa too many high words, but I Wisha to improve my education. English, it is most confusing. There are many words which meana de same. You calla them sinonoms, in it not?

"Synonyms, Synonyms. Thanka you Mr. Lovett.

"Last week I geta rid of all my monies. I paya de bills. I paya for heels \$11. - and get all squara up. I paya \$40. - for leather and get all squara up. I also squara for de electricity and de rent."

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"One time I goa to Methodist picnic. I was then unrequaint-ed in Beverly. De The preacha invita me.

"I aska to come also three young Italians. They saya, 'do we taka something to eat? I replya, 'we does. '

"What do you suppose we fix-ed up for lunch? The day before we cooka three chickens. My! My, My, we filla up de box so biga as this.

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"Yes, we take bread and Italian pastries. There is also mucha fruit and in de box six bottles of beer.

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"Hah! Hah! you laugh? You woulda laugh better, when you seea us arrive at de special cars.

"Two of de Italians must carry de box, it is so large. Besides we hava de guitars and violin. When we stopa by Y.M.C.A., de peoples turna their heads and showa great surprise.

"We go to Idlewood Lake. Has you ever beena there. It is de lovely spot.

"Firsta off de mens playa baseball. They is too companies choos-ed. One is de married mens. De other company hava no wives.

"No, I should saya not. Never before did I seea that game. One of de Italians playa however. I watcha it.

"My gracious, they runa in circles lika they was crazy. They whacka that ball hard with de big stick. Everyones geta most excit-ed.

"De Italian, he lacka de skill. He was however very what you call it jealous - sure I meana zealous - and mosta brave.

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"He swinga de stick - yes bat - with great force.

"No, he did not at first hita de ball, but he swings de bat so hard it maka noise lika this; Swish! Believa you me, he hita so hard, that he turna around and falla down.

"De biga boss - oh, you calla him de umpire, he shouta, 'Strika one! Why does he calla that, Mr, Lovett? Nicky did not strika de ball whatever.

"Oh, sure, I seea. He also called, Strika two, and strike three! Then de boss maka Nicky sita down.

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"Let me tella you. Bye and bye he did hita de ball. It was marvelous. He smacka it, bang! De ball flya swiftly above de trees. Many peoples chasa it. But Nicky he runna around swiftly. Very soon he coma back to what they call-ed home. The ball it was returna home also. I thinka at first de ball would wina de race.

"What happened? My Jingo! Everybody is shouta lika lunatic. Some peoples, urga Nicky with loudness. They saya, 'Slide Nicky! Slide!

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"Does he slide? My gracious, he maka de long dive. I waso frightened.

"Yes, he wina de race with de ball. But he geta much dirt on de clothes. He was also bruised.

"Does he scora de run? I does not thinka so. They play no more. They maka big quarrel.

"I does no understand de baseball, Mr. Lovett. Whata happened was most disgraceful for church picnic.

"De umpire, he tried, I thinka, to compela Nicky to retraca his steps to de middle station. He shouta, that Nicky did not toucha second.

"Sure, you knowa de rules. But many peoples gota angry. They does not agree with de boss. They destroya de harmony. Nicky he calla de umpire many evil words. He maka threats. He pusha him so hard he falla an his backsides.

"What then? My goodness! De preacher he called, 'Boys! Boys! You must not forgeta yourself. De game it is end-ed. Let us eat!

"Who wina de game? I does not know. I think nobody wina de battle. Perhaps they calla it de tie.

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"Sure, we enjoya our lunch. We taka de box in shade of some trees. We spreada many papers for table. Also we sticka up in de ground two flags, de Italian flag and de American.

"No, we eata alone. De other peoples, they looka at us with interest. They did not however joina in.

"My Jingo, I thinka they hava envy. We eata our chickens, also de pastry and de fruit. We drinka de beer. Then we maka music.

"Did de peoples maka objections to de beer? No, they looka at us with doubts. They speaks behind their hands lika this.

"Yes, you is right. It was, I ama sure, very strange for church picnic. Hah! Hah! Hah! Never before or since, does peoples drinka beer at Methodist picnic. Today I myself knowa better, I acta mucha different. Then I wasa young.

"Well, in de afternoon, we hirea de boat and row on de lake. We playa and sing with enthusiasm.

"Yes, we hava de nother adventure. Never will I forgeta it. Looka here at de scar on my forehead Mr, Lovett. It Is de souvineer that I shall always keepa.

"It happened so. We rowa up de lake. Bye and bye we coma to de straits. Does you know what I meana? Yes de narrow place. There de boat sticka fast. It will not mova ahead. It will not mova back.

"Oh dear! Oh Dear! I will tella you quick. [We?] trya to make de boat move. One of de Italians pusha with; what do you calla it? De roar? Oh yes, de oar. He swinga de oar round lika this. It hita me on de head. Miserari! That fool he knocks me into water, I spoila my clothes. My head it bleada much.

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"Then, de woman binda my forehead with de cloth. She fixed it with skill and gentleness. I thinka de waman's name it is Thompson. Once she wasa de nurse. Does you knowa her?

"My clothes? They is most discomfortable. I sita in de sun and drya some. Soon we goa home to Beverly.

"No, I do not thinka de picnic was mucha suscess. I heara woman say -, 'Why do they permita Dagoes 8 to getta drunk and spoila de picnic? '

"Of course, it was de lie. I was nota drunk. Never have I been drunka. You knowa yourself, that nobodys gota drunk from one bottle of de beer.

"Sure, it is too bad, that de "Americans do not understand better de Italians. Some calla them [ops?]. It prevents de perfect cooperation."

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